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IN THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

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1. (currently amended) In a communication system comprising at least one telephone switch and at least one communication device:

a virtual phone generic configurable interface between said telephone switch and said communication device to serve as a protocol interpreter of the protocol of said telephone switch and to convert the protocol of said telephone switch and the protocols of applications associated with the operation of said switch and said communication device into a common protocol format to enable communication between said switch and said communication device.
 2. (previously presented) A system according to claim 1, wherein said means for providing a virtual phone generic configurable interface includes a set of virtual phone data structures to represent the state of a phone as known to the telephone switch at any given time.
 3. (previously presented) A system according to claim 1, wherein said virtual phone generic configurable interface includes a component to provide a virtual phone application program interface for providing data communication between said telephone switch and said communication device.

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4. (previously presented) A system according to claim 1, wherein said virtual phone generic configurable interface includes a component to provide a communications protocol for the transfer of phone control information between said telephone switch and said communication device.

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5. (previously presented) A system according to claim 1, wherein said means for providing a virtual phone generic configurable interface comprises:

- a) a set of virtual phone data structures to represent the state of a phone as known to the telephone switch at any given time; and
- b) a program interface to access said data structures.

6. (previously presented) A system according to claim 5, wherein said program interface to access said data structures comprises a virtual phone application program interface to provide data communication between said set of virtual phone data structures and said switch and said communication device.

7. (currently amended) In a telephone communication system comprising at least one telephone switch, at least one telephone and a computer to process applications related to the operation of said telephone switch and said telephone:

a virtual phone generic configurable interface to serve as a protocol interpreter between protocols of said telephone switch and protocols of said applications to convert the protocols of

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said telephone switch and the protocols of said ~~application~~ applications into a common protocol format to enable communication between said telephone switch and said telephone.

B 8. (previously presented) A system according to claim 7, wherein said virtual phone generic interface comprises:

- a) a set of virtual phone data structures to represent the state of a phone as known to the telephone switch at any given time; and
- b) a program interface to access said data structures; and
- c) a protocol to establish communication between said computer and said data structures; and

9. (previously presented) A system according to claim 8, wherein said program interface to access said data structures comprises:

- a) an internal virtual phone application program interface to provide data communication between said set of virtual phone data structures and said telephone switch and said telephone; and
- b) an external virtual phone application program interface to provide data communication between said set of virtual phone data structures and said computer.

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10. (previously presented) A system according to claim 9, further including a communications protocol to provide communication between said external virtual phone application program interface and said computer.

B 11-14. (canceled)

15. (currently amended) A method for providing communication in a system comprising at least one telephone switch and at least one communication device, said method comprising:

- a) providing a virtual phone generic configurable interface to serve as a protocol interpreter of the protocol of said telephone switch; and
- b) utilizing said virtual phone generic configurable interface to convert the protocol of said telephone switch and the protocols of applications associated with the operation of said telephone switch and said communication device into a common protocol format to enable communication between said telephone switch and said communication switch; and

16. (previously presented) A method according to claim 15, wherein said providing a virtual phone generic configurable interface comprises providing a set of virtual phone data structures for representing the state of a phone as known to the telephone switch at any given time.

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17. (previously presented) A method according to claim 15, wherein said providing a virtual telephone generic configurable interface comprises providing a virtual phone application program interface for providing data communication between said telephone switch and said communication device.

B 18. (previously presented) A method according to claim 15, wherein said providing a virtual phone generic configurable interface comprises:

- a) providing a set of virtual phone data structures for representing the state of a phone as known to the telephone switch at any given time; and
- b) providing a program interface for accessing said structures.

19. (previously presented) A method according to claim 18, wherein said providing a program interface for accessing said data structures comprises providing a virtual phone application program interface for providing data communication between said set of virtual phone data structures and said switch and said communication device.

20-28. (canceled)

29. (currently amended) In a communication system comprising at least one communication switch and at least one communication device:

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a media control proxy to serve as a gateway between said communication switch and said communication device to bridge any gap in communication protocols between said communication switch and said communication device and to convert said communication protocols to a common protocol format to enable communication between said communication switch and said communication device.

30. (currently amended) A system according to claim 29, wherein said media control proxy includes a component to ~~converting~~ convert a fixed control protocol of an original connection between said communication switch and said communication device to a communications method for supporting any given communication device.

31. (original) A system according to claim 29, wherein a first data bearer channel and a first control channel each are connected to said communication switch and to said media control proxy and a second data bearer channel and a second control channel are connected to said media control proxy and to said communication device.

32. (previously presented) A system according to claim 31, wherein said media control proxy includes a component to pass through data on said first and second data bearer channels.

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33. (previously presented) A system according to claim 31, wherein said media control proxy includes a processor to process information on said first and second control channels for conversion to a protocol understood by said communications device.

B 34. (currently amended) A method for providing communication in a system comprising at least one communication switch and at least one communication device, said method comprising:

a) providing a media control proxy to serve as a gateway between said communication switch and said communication device to bridge any gap in communication protocols between said communication switch and said communication device and to convert said communication protocols to a common protocol format; and

b) utilizing said media control proxy to enable communication between said communication switch and said communication device.

35. (previously presented) A method according to claim 34, wherein said providing a media control proxy comprises connecting a fixed control protocol of an original connection between said communication switch and said communication device to a communications method for supporting any given communication device.

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36. (previously presented) A method according to claim 34, wherein said providing a media control proxy comprises passing through bearer channel data between said communication switch and said communication device.

B 37. (previously presented) A method according to claim 34, wherein said providing a media control proxy comprises processing control information from said communication switch for conversion to a protocol understood by said communication device.

38. (previously presented) A method according to claim 34, wherein said providing a media control proxy comprises interpreting control information received from said communication switch and maintaining the state of the communication device as defined by the communication switch.

39. (previously presented) A method according to claim 34, wherein said providing a media control proxy comprises transmitting data to said communication switch on a control channel between said media control proxy and said communication switch in a protocol native to said communication switch so that said communication switch interprets a message from said media control proxy as a message from said communication device.

40. (canceled)